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ABSTRACT

In 1999 the Office of Human Resources at Nova Southeastern University (Florida) prepared a survey, based on a previous study, to gather information about employee satisfaction with the University's services. This report summarizes the results of this customer satisfaction survey. Surveys were returned by 466 of the 1,941 potential respondents, a return rate of 24%. It is possible that the respondents are not fully representative of the entire employee population with disproportionate numbers of women and new employees responding. Overall, there was a high degree of satisfaction with services, and the responses to the two summative questions about satisfaction were also positive. Results for 2 areas suggest that the University may need to review services for employees who made a hiring decision within the last 2 years and respondents who completed a University performance appraisal within the last 2 years. These employees did not express the same degree of satisfaction as others. An appendix contains six tables of survey data. (SLD)

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NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY'S EMPLOYEES RESPOND TO A 1999 OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

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Thomas W. MacFarland **Senior Research Associate**
Report 00-01 **February 2000**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Nova Southeastern University's Office of Human Resources, in 1995, developed a *Customer Satisfaction Survey* that was used to provide a sense of employee satisfaction with services. The University's Office of Research and Planning administered this survey and in 1996 prepared a summary report of survey findings. This reporting process was used as a tool for self-improvement and it was also incorporated into the University's *Quality Improvement Plan*, a reporting process required by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools of all University administrative service units.

Using this 1995 survey process and 1996 report as a base, the University's Office of Human Resources prepared in 1999 a slightly modified instrument, with modifications made only to reflect changes at the University over the last three years. Research and Planning again offered technical guidance on survey construction and the survey instrument was in final form by Fall 1999.

The purpose of this report is to summarize the results of the 1999 *Office of Human Resources Customer Satisfaction Survey*. It is expected that results will again be incorporated into the University's *Quality Improvement Plan*, with findings used to support improvement by an administrative service unit that has an impact on each employee of the University.

The survey was distributed through interoffice mail on September 28, 1999, to all full-time University employees, with the exception of the 30 employees in the Office of Human Resources. Completed surveys were directed to Research and Planning, and surveys were accepted until October 12, 1999. Surveys were returned by 466 of 1,941 potential respondents (the 30 OHR employees were excluded from the invited sample), for a return rate of 24 percent.

Regarding the responding sample, there is a concern that the responding sample may not be fully representative of the population, with a disproportionate representation of females and new employees included in the responding sample:

- Although 62 percent of all University employees are female, females represented 68 percent of all survey respondents.

- The modal years of employment at the University was one year (22 percent of the responding sample), which may also be unrepresentative of the population, with a disproportionate level of survey completion by new employees.

Overall, there was a high degree of satisfaction with services, as demonstrated by the observation that the majority of all responses were 4 (1 = Very Dissatisfied to 5 = Very Satisfied). Further, the two summative questions on overall satisfaction with services were also viewed as being positive, with each summative statement receiving a median rating of 4. However, it may be useful for the Office of Human Resources to more closely review services for respondents who made a hiring decision within the last two years and also respondents who conducted a NSU performance appraisal within the last two years. In these two areas, there were a noticeable number of survey statements that did not receive the level of satisfaction shown in other parts of the survey.

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INTRODUCTION

Background

In 1995, Nova Southeastern University's Office of Human Resources (OHR) developed a *Customer Satisfaction Survey* that was used to provide a sense of employee satisfaction with services. Completed surveys were processed by the University's Office of Research and Planning and presented in a 1996 report (*Employee Reaction to the 1996 Human Resources Customer Satisfaction Survey*; 1996). Along with its immediate use as a tool to support self-improvement, the survey process and subsequent report were also used by OHR as a valued contribution to the University's *Quality Improvement Plan*, a reporting process required of the University's administrative service units (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; *Criteria for Accreditation*, 1998, p. 21).

Purpose of This Study

Using this prior survey process as a base, the University's OHR used the 1995 survey instrument, slightly modified to reflect changes at the University over the last three years, as a draft instrument for a planned replication of the University-wide survey process. Research and Planning again offered technical guidance on survey construction. The survey instrument was in final form by Fall 1999.

The purpose of this report is to summarize the results of the 1999 *Office of Human Resources Customer Satisfaction Survey*. It is expected that results will be incorporated into OHR's contribution to the University's *Quality Improvement Plan*, with findings used to support improvement by an administrative service unit that has an impact on each employee of the University. Additionally, through the OHR newsletter and other possible media, results will be made available to the University community to further include employees in this important assessment process.

METHODOLOGY

Survey Development

In Summer 1999, the Associate Vice President for Human Resources contacted Research and Planning, to review the 1995 *Office of Human Resources Customer Satisfaction Survey* instrument and to plan for a replication of this survey process. A few modifications to the survey were needed, to reflect changes at the University and the survey was put into final form by September 16, 1999.

Sampling

The survey was distributed through interoffice mail on September 28, 1999, to all full-time University employees, with the exception of the 30 employees in the Office of Human Resources. Completed surveys were directed to Research and Planning, and surveys were accepted until October 12, 1999.

Characteristics of the population and the responding sample by job category are presented in Table 1, by gender in Table 2, by length of employment at the University in Table 3, by status as a NSU graduate in Table 4, and by academic center or administrative unit in Table 5. As presented in these separate tables, surveys were returned by 466 of 1,941 potential respondents (the 30 OHR employees were excluded from the invited sample), for a return rate of 24 percent.

There is a concern, however, that the responding sample may not be fully representative of the population, with a disproportionate representation of females and new employees included in the responding sample:

- Although 62 percent of all University employees are female, females represented 68 percent of all survey respondents.
- The modal years of employment at the University was one year (22 percent of the responding sample), which may also be unrepresentative of the population, with a disproportionate level of survey completion by new employees.

RESULTS

Results to individual survey statements are presented in Table 6. Overall, there was a high degree of satisfaction with services as demonstrated by the observation that the majority of all responses was 4 (1 = Very Dissatisfied to 5 = Very Satisfied). Further, the two summative questions on overall satisfaction with services were also viewed as being positive:

	Respondents					
	N	**%**	**Mode**	**Median**	**Mean**	**SD**
What is your overall rating of the Office of Human Resources	461	99	4	4	3.6	1
What is your overall rating of Payroll	445	95	4	4	4.0	0.9

A review of Table 6, however, provides evidence that it may be useful for OHR to more closely review services for respondents who made a hiring decision within the last two years and also respondents who conducted a NSU performance appraisal within the last two years. In these two areas, there were a noticeable number of survey statements that did not receive the level of satisfaction shown in other parts of the survey.

SUMMARY

Statistics from this report will again be useful as the Office of Human Resources prepares for the University's *Quality Improvement Plan*. It is also anticipated that survey results, because they will be communicated with University employees, will also provide employees a better understanding of the many types of services offered by OHR.

Overall, University employees had a positive view of both the Office of Human Resources and Payroll Services. Attention to concerns among respondents who made a hiring decision within the last two years and also respondents who conducted a NSU performance appraisal within the last two years, along with broad dissemination of overall survey results, will only strengthen the usefulness of the survey process.

REFERENCES

Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. (1998). *Criteria for Accreditation*. Decatur, Georgia.

Employee Reaction to the 1996 Human Resources Customer Satisfaction Survey. (1996). Fort Lauderdale, Florida: Nova Southeastern University. Research and Planning Report 96-04.

APPENDIX

Table 1

Job Category

	All NSU Employees	Respondents	
Job Category	**N**	**N**	**Percent of Total**
Supervisory/Managerial ...	171	89	19.1
Professional[1]	771	140	30.0
Clerical/Secretarial	556	107	23.0
Faculty	473	115	24.7
Unidentified	n/a	15	3.2
TOTAL	1,971	466	

Table 2

Gender

	All NSU Employees	Respondents	
Gender	**N**	**N**	**Percent of Total**
Male	749	123	26.4
Female	1,222	318	68.2
Unidentified	n/a	25	3.2
TOTAL	1,971	466	

[1] Using IPEDS Fall Staff Survey categories as a basis for the population, this listing includes Professional (N = 599), Technical/Paraprofessional (N = 106), and Maintenance/Skilled Crafts (N = 66).

Table 3

Years Employed at NSU

Responding N	401
Range	0 to 33
Mode	1
Median	4
Mean	6.2
SD	6.2

Table 4

Status of Respondents as a NSU Graduate

Status as a NSU Graduate	N	Percent of Total
Yes	85	18.2
No	306	65.7
Unidentified	75	16.1
TOTAL	466	

Table 5

Academic Center or Administrative Unit of Respondents

Job Category	N	Percent of Total
ACADEMIC CENTERS		
Center for Psychological Studies	44	9.4
Family and School Center	38	8.2
Farquhar Center for Undergraduate Studies	57	12.2
Fischler Graduate School of Education and Human Services	48	10.3
Health Professions Division	115	24.7
Oceanographic Center	5	1.1
School of Social and Systemic Studies	11	2.4
School of Computer and Information Sciences	12	2.6
School of Business and Entrepreneurship	23	4.9
Shepard Broad Law Center	27	5.8
ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS		
Academic Affairs	2	0.4
Administration Office	5	1.1
Financial Operations	1	0.2
Human Resources	0	0.0
Information Services/Library	5	1.1
Information Technologies	8	1.7
Institutional Advancement	5	1.1
Research and Planning	3	0.6
Student Affairs	6	1.3

Other	37	7.9
Unidentified	14	3.0
TOTAL	466	

Table 6

Responses to Individual Survey Statements

Statement	N	Mode	Median	Mean	SD
EMPLOYEE RELATIONS					
Courtesy of Human Resources staff:					
Telephone	442	4	4	3.8	1.0
In-person	403	4	4	3.9	1.0
Timeliness of responses from the Human Resources staff	429	4	4	3.4	1.2
Consultation with Human Resources staff for problem resolution (with co-worker, boss, employee)	229	4	4	3.6	1.1
Consultation with Human Resources staff for disciplinary actions/grievances	116	4	4	3.5	1.1
Expertise/knowledge of Human Resources staff in					
University benefits	422	4	4	4.0	1.0
Personnel policies and procedures	397	4	4	3.9	1.0
Other	40	4	4	3.3	1.4
PAYROLL SERVICES					
Interactions as a customer with the Payroll Office	372	4	4	4.1	0.9
Timeliness of response by Payroll staff to questions/concerns	369	4	4	4.0	1.0
Courtesy of the Payroll staff	376	4	4	4.2	0.9

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Life Insurance (Current coverage is annual salary to nearest $1000)	337	4	4	3.6	1.1
Medical plans[2]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Flexible Spending Accounts administration					
Healthcare account	148	4	4	3.8	1.1
Dependent care account	76	3	3	3.4	1.2
Retirement Plan[3]					
Choice of options under TIAA-CREF	352	5	4	4.3	0.8
Counseling assistance provided by Human Resources	289	4	4	3.6	1.1
Importance of undergraduate/graduate tuition waiver as a benefit[4]	353	5	4	4.4	1.1

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[2] In response to queries about medical plans, respondents indicated the following:

A. Type of plan

BC-BS HMO	N = 183	39.3 %
BC-BS PPO	N = 121	26.0 %
BC-BS POS	N = 51	10.9 %
No Coverage	N = 73	15.7 %
Unidentified	N = 38	8.2 %

B. Most important medical benefit

Cost of medical plan	N = 219	47.0 %
Keeping physician	N = 156	33.5 %

[3] Nearly three out of four respondents (N = 343 of 466 or 73.6 percent) indicated that they participate in the retirement plan.

[4] Over 40 percent (N = 198 of 466 or 42.5 percent) of all respondents indicated that they have enrolled in classes at NSU and slightly more than 10 percent (N = 55 of 466 or 11.8 percent) indicated than their dependents/spouse have enrolled in classes at NSU.

COMMUNICATION

Memos distributed to all employees from Human Resources					
Readability	449	4	4	4.0	0.9
Usefulness	445	4	4	3.7	0.9
Timeliness	437	4	4	3.6	1.0
Human Resources newsletter (published quarterly)					
Readability	437	4	4	4.0	0.9
Usefulness	436	4	4	3.7	1.0
Timeliness	427	4	4	3.7	1.0
Health insurance annual open enrollment announcements					
Readability	370	4	4	3.9	0.9
Usefulness	372	4	4	3.9	1.0
Timeliness	368	4	4	3.7	1.0
Office of Human Resources web page					
Readability	236	4	4	3.9	0.9
Usefulness	235	4	4	3.9	0.9
Timeliness	230	4	4	3.8	0.9
Job vacancy bulletin					
Readability	350	4	4	4.1	0.9
Usefulness	348	4	4	4.0	1.0
Timeliness	345	4	4	3.8	1.1
University policies					
Readability	436	4	4	3.8	0.9
Usefulness	433	4	4	3.8	0.9
Timeliness	426	4	4	3.7	1.0

MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES

Special events sponsored by Human Resources					
December employee awards luncheon	320	4	4	3.9	1.1
Holiday parties	294	4	4	3.6	1.2
Annual health fair	278	4	4	3.6	1.1

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES: RESPONDENTS HIRED WITHIN THE LAST TWO YEARS

Effectiveness of job advertisements/ announcements	160	4	4	3.9	1.0
Interaction with Human Resources as an applicant	173	4	4	3.8	1.1
Interaction(s) with hiring department(s) as an applicant	167	5	4	4.0	1.1

NEW EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION

Quality of presentation of orientation material	197	4	4	4.1	0.9
Length of orientation program	196	4	4	3.7	1.1
Use of outside speakers during orientation program	159	4	4	3.8	1.0
Use of visual media during orientation program	184	4	4	3.8	1.1
Relevance of orientation information to you as an employee	195	4	4	4.0	1.0
Clarity of information contained in Employee Handbook	192	4	4	3.9	1.0
Information presented by Human Resources about benefits	199	4	4	4.0	0.9
Usefulness of written benefits materials	195	4	4	4.0	0.9
Clarity of explanations of policies and procedures by the Human Resources staff	194	4	4	3.9	1.0

RESPONDENTS WHO MADE A HIRING DECISION WITHIN THE LAST TWO YEARS

Interaction(s) with Human Resources as a hiring official	137	4	3	3.1	1.2
Assistance in writing/placing job announcement(s) and/or newspaper ad(s)	116	4	3	3.0	1.1
Timeliness of response by HR staff in posting/ advertising job	131	4	3	2.8	1.2
Assistance/consultation provided by the HR staff in compensation/classification of vacant positions	122	2	3	2.8	1.2
Information and hiring forms provided to you by Human Resources	129	4	3	3.2	1.1
Consultation provided by HR staff in support of the hiring process	125	4	3	3.0	1.2

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCESS: RESPONDENTS WHO RECEIVED A NSU PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL WITHIN THE PAST TWO YEARS

Relevance of performance criteria to your job	324	4	4	3.6	1.2
Usefulness of feedback for performance planning	321	4	4	3.5	1.2
Timeliness	319	4	4	3.5	1.2
Quality of discussion with supervisor	319	4	4	3.7	1.2
Overall satisfaction with appraisal process	324	4	4	3.4	1.3

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCESS: RESPONDENTS WHO CONDUCTED A NSU PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL WITHIN THE PAST TWO YEARS

Relevance of performance factors to jobs being evaluated	158	4	3	3.3	1.1
Manageability of appraisal process	157	3	3	3.4	1.1
Time of the year appraisals conducted	157	4	3	3.4	1.1
Usefulness of discussion with employee	155	4	4	3.6	1.1
Overall satisfaction with the appraisal process	157	4	3	3.2	1.1
HR assistance in training/conducting evaluations	121	3	3	3.0	1.1

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT: RESPONDENTS WHO ATTENDED A TRAINING SESSION WITHIN THE LAST YEAR

Quality of training session content and material	163	4	4	3.6	1.1
Relevance of training to improving your job skills	161	4	4	3.5	1.1
Length of training sessions	163	4	4	3.6	1.0
Presentation of training material by instructor	162	4	4	3.7	1.1
Application of training content to your job	162	4	4	3.5	1.1

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT: SUPERVISOR OF EMPLOYEES WHO ATTENDED A TRAINING SESSION WITHIN THE LAST YEAR

Application/improvement in skills learned and applied on the job	100	3	3	3.4	1.0

GENERAL EVALUATION

What is your overall rating of the Office of Human Resources	461	4	4	3.6	1.0
What is your overall rating of Payroll	445	4	4	4.0	0.9

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